

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to the amendment filed December 18, 2009, amending claim 1 and adding new claim 134. Claims 1,3-4,6-11, 13, 16-17,35,37-44,64-65,69-70,75,77-79,82, 84-89 and 134 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

2. Claims 1,3-4,6-11, 13, 16-17,35,37-44,64-65,69-70,75,77-79,82, 84-89 and 134 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber (US Patent No. 6,434,524) in view of Eberle et al (US Patent No. 7, 440, 898).

3. Weber discloses a system and method for interacting with objects, via a computer using utterances, speech processing and natural language processing.

4. Regarding claim 1, Weber discloses an apparatus, system and method implementing a general purpose computer (102) including associated memory (108) storage (col. 5, lines 27-29); a voice application platform ("voice interaction system) including a speech recognizer (200) for recognizing speech as a function of said unit of input information (col. 4, lines 13-17); and a command processor (202) adapted for analyzing a first unit of input information. Additionally, Weber teaches the system allows for adding to the context-specific grammars (col. 8, lines 38-45; col. 15, line 6 to col. 16, line 65; Figure 7A) and provides for a first application (accessing a help file or browsing the world wide web) configured to output a grammar (context-specific

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grammar files and context-specific dictation models) and to receive a user selection (speech interactions available to the user) associated with the grammar; a voice application platform (col. 4, lines 13-17) for receiving a speech input and the grammar from the first application (DDF file transferred), and to output the user selection (speech interactions) to the first application, the voice application platform including a processor (col. 3, lines 39-50) configured to analyze the grammar and to modify the grammar (col. 12, line 60 continuing to col. 13, line 24), and a speech recognizer (200) coupled to the processor and configured to interpret the speech input (speech interactions available to the user) as a function of the data input object, and to produce the user selection.

Weber does not disclose, but Eberle suggests a system to analyze the grammar prior to receiving speech input, to identify at least one characteristic of the grammar independent of prior speech input and wherein the input is not acceptable response in the grammar received from the first application, but is an acceptable response in the modified grammar, which modifies application menus and modifies or updates the grammar based on content (col.16, line 27 to col. 17, line 4; col. 23, lines21-25; col. 24, line 41 to col. 26, line 20). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of the invention to modify the system of Weber to implement a system of analyzing and modifying the grammar prior to receiving speech input, as suggested by Eberle, for the purpose of ensuring the user always has the most recent version of the menu that is used for a particular system.

Regarding claims 3 and 64-65, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses characteristic is indicative that said first unit of input information includes a set of terms and said first unit of input information is modified to produce said modified first unit of input information

that includes at least one additional term not included in said first unit of input information (col. 8, lines 38-41; col. 9, lines 8-17; col. 9, lines 42-63; col. 12, lines 51-67).

Regarding claim 4, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses at least one additional term is a synonym of at least one term in said set of terms (col. 10, lines 56-61).

Regarding claim 6, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses at least one additional term is associated with a first function that can be performed when said voice application platform recognizes said at least one addition term (col. 8, lines 38-41; col. 9, lines 8-17; col. 9, lines 42-63; col. 12, lines 51-67).

Regarding claim 7, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses said set of terms is representative of a set of responses expected to be received by said application and said at least one additional term is a synonym of at least one term in said set of terms (col. 10, lines 56-61).

Regarding claim 8, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses said set of terms is representative of a set of responses expected to be received by said application and said at least one additional term is associated with a first function that can be performed when said voice application platform recognizes said at least one addition term, whereby said first function is adapted to include in a response to be sent to said application, at least one term in said set of terms (col. 8, lines 38-41; col. 9, lines 8-17; col. 9, lines 42-63; col. 12, lines 51-67).

Regarding claim 9, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses first function is further adapted for substituting said at least one term in said set of terms for said at least one additional term in a response to be sent to said application (col. 8, lines 38-41; col. 9, lines 8-17; col. 9, lines 42-63; col. 12, lines 51-67).

Regarding claim 10, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses set of terms is representative of a set of responses expected to be received by said application and said at least one additional term is associated with a first function that can be performed when said voice application platform recognizes said at least one addition term, whereby said first function is adapted to include, in a response to be sent to said application, a term selected from a memory as a function of said at least one additional term recognized by said voice application platform (col. 8, lines 38-41; col. 9, lines 8-17; col. 9, lines 42-63; col. 12, lines 51-67).

Regarding claim 11, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses term selected from a memory is associated with a user of said voice application platform (col. 10, lines 4-16).

Regarding claim 13, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses said first unit of input information includes a first type of input information associated with a first speech recognizer based upon a first speech recognition paradigm (“context-specific grammar”) and said first unit of input information is modified to produce a second unit of input information which includes a second type of input information associated with a second speech recognizer based upon a second speech recognition paradigm (“general grammar”) which is different from said first speech recognition paradigm (col. 3, lines 8-11).

Regarding claim 16, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses a prompt synthesizer (col. 12, lines 47-50) adapted for receiving information representative of a prompt, and wherein said first unit of input information includes information representative of a prompt and said command processor receives said information representative of a prompt and said command processor modifies said first unit of input information as a function of said information representative of a prompt (col. 12, lines 52-59).

Regarding claims 17, 69 and 70, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses (col. 12, lines 45-59) a prompt synthesizer adapted for receiving information representative of a prompt, and wherein information representative of a first prompt is received from said application and said voice application platform is adapted for presenting said first prompt to a user and a second prompt to said user.

Regarding claim 134, the combination of Weber and Eberle discloses a DTMF decoder that is capable of decoding Touch Tone signals that are generated by a telephone and can be used for data input (col. 19, lines 10-12).

9. Regarding claims 35, 37-44, 75, 77-79, 82, and 84-89: claims 35, 37-44, 75, 77-79, 82, and 84-89 are similar in scope and content to claims 1, 3-4, 6-11, 13, 16-17, 64-65, and 69-70 and are therefore rejected under similar rationale.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments filed December 18, 2009, have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues the teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination, here the combination of Weber and Eberle to ensure a user's menu is recent, must be found in the art, and not based on Applicants' own disclosure. In response the Examiner argues Weber specifically teaches the system ensures a user has an updated menu/grammar at least at col. 4, lines 14-16; col. 13, lines 9-12; and col. 17, lines 4-9.

Applicant argues the combination of Weber and Eberle for the reason proffered by the Office Action is, further, also improper because a skilled artisan would have recognized that to analyze and to modify a grammar before receiving speech input would impose a computational burden without knowing, a priori, whether such an analysis and modification is necessary. In response, the Examiner argues one of ordinary would have recognized the advantages of analyzing and modifying a grammar before receiving speech input would assist in increasing interactive efficiency through various grammar updates, as suggested by Weber (col. 17, lines 4-9).

Applicant argues the disclosure of Eberle is devoid of teachings of grammar as the term is applied within either the meaning of the present application or of Weber. In response, the Examiner argues the system of Eberle necessarily requires some form of a grammar in order to implement the speech recognition functionality.

Conclusion

11. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ANGELA A. ARMSTRONG whose telephone number is (571)272-7598. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 11:30-8:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richemond Dorvil can be reached on 571-272-7602. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Angela A Armstrong/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2626